



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 1997

AT
(202) 616-2771
TDD (202) 514-1888

**FORMER ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES PURCHASING AGENT
IN FLORIDA & MICHIGAN CHARGED IN NEW YORK WITH
CONSPIRING TO COMMIT MAIL FRAUD**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A former alcoholic beverages purchasing agent in Florida and Michigan pleaded guilty today to conspiring to defraud his employers of about \$850,000 he received as kickbacks from suppliers of display materials used to advertise and promote products in retail stores, said the Department of Justice.

To date, 12 individuals and four corporations have pleaded guilty or agreed to plead guilty to various federal charges as a result of the Department of Justice's ongoing antitrust investigation of bid-rigging, commercial bribery and tax related offenses in the display industry. In addition, two individuals and four corporations are awaiting trial in New York on charges arising from the same investigation.

The Department's Antitrust Division filed criminal charges today in federal court in the Southern District of New York (New York City) against Irwin Englander, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The case charged that Englander conspired with others to defraud his employers – Hiram Walker & Sons Inc. and its subsidiary, W.A. Taylor Inc.--of about \$850,000 he received as kickbacks from suppliers of point-of-purchase display materials.

The Department said that the unnamed co-conspirators – display materials companies in New Jersey and Wisconsin – agreed to pay Englander kickbacks on the contracts that Englander awarded the companies. Most of the kickback payments were sent to Englander by mail. The conspiracy took place from July 1988 until February 1994.

Point-of-purchase display materials are used to advertise and display various kinds of consumer goods, primarily in retail stores.

Joel I. Klein, Acting Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division, said the charges stem from an investigation in New York City into collusive practices by suppliers of point-of-purchase display materials. Klein said the investigation, being conducted by the Antitrust Division's New York field office with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service, is continuing.

Hiram Walker & Sons Inc., a manufacturer, importer and distributor of alcoholic beverages, is located in Southfield, Michigan. The now defunct Miami-based W.A. Taylor Inc. was also an importer and distributor of alcoholic beverages.

The maximum penalty for an individual convicted of participating in a conspiracy to commit mail fraud is five years in prison and a fine not to exceed the greatest of \$250,000, twice the pecuniary gain derived from the crime or twice the pecuniary loss caused to the victims, together with the costs of the prosecution.

Anyone with information concerning bid rigging, bribery or fraud in the display industry should contact the New York Division of the FBI at (212) 384-1000.

###

97-008